

## Eli's Hospice Insider

### Hospice News: Hospice Competition Heats Up In Florida

**Numerous health care organizations are jumping** at an opportunity to establish a hospice presence in Tampa Bay, Fla.

The state has declared a need for hospice services in Hillsborough and Pasco counties, and multiple providers including three hospitals have expressed interest, reports the Tampa Bay Times newspaper.

**BayCare Health System** proposes teaming up with **Suncoast Hospice**, which now serves only Pinellas County, to form a new nonprofit hospice program in Hillsborough and Pasco, the Times says. **Tampa General Hospital** and **Florida Hospital Tampa**, meanwhile, want to partner together on a hospice program to serve those two counties.

Pasco-based **Gulfside Hospice** wants to expand into Hillsborough, according to the newspaper. **Hospice of Citrus County** proposes moving into Hillsborough and Pasco, and the other applicants are hospices based outside the Tampa Bay area.

But the road to a certificate of need is far from easy. Hospice of Citrus County failed to prove to an administrative law judge that it should be allowed to expand into Hernando County to offer pediatric services, reports the Times. The ALJ overturned the state **Agency for Health Care Administration's** ruling that granted the Citrus hospice a CON allowing for the expansion into Hernando. The CON decision was challenged by Hernando County's sole hospice provider, **HPH Hospice**.

The legal battle continues, as Citrus has already filed an appeal of the ALJ ruling, the newspaper says.